

How Does This Space Make You Feel?

Analyzing Architectural Space

This is good exercise to move students' understanding from what they have experienced to understanding how that experience was shaped. It is sometimes easier for the students to understand this assignment by first practicing it as a group. Have the students think of their favorite place in which to read and ask them think of 5 characteristics of that place and name them. Eliminate all that are not architectural. (Furniture, or objects in the space do not qualify; color, texture, lighting do. For example, if students think the space makes them feel cozy because of the rugs and soft sofas in it, they are focusing on objects rather than the space. A better response is that the room is small, with warm deep colors and low light). Identify those that are architectural.

Materials:

- Something to write on
- Something to write or draw with
- The activity sheet

Distribute the activity sheet and be sure that students understand the terms. Students must identify **elements of the architectural space**. Next, have the students return to their individual spaces and write down their responses.

Discuss their answers in a group, and help them understand how their responses describe basic design elements that architects employ to shape spaces. Some elements are listed here, with suggested Fallingwater spaces in italics.

Function:

What is the building/space supposed to do?
Living room, any bedroom

Size:

For how many people?
Living room, any bedroom

Form:

What is its shape? Why?
Living room, master bedroom

Scale:

How do people fit into this space?
Guest bedroom

Structure:

How is it built?
Any terrace

Materials:

What is it made of?
Anywhere

Textures:

What do the materials feel like?
Anywhere

Colors:

What do the colors look like—warm, shiny, etc.
Anywhere

Light:

How bright? Where is it? Is it direct or indirect?
Hallway, bridge over driveway, master bedroom

Circulation:

How do you move through this space?
Second floor landing, canopied walkway

Plan:

Is it open, or are spaces separate from one another? *Living room, upstairs*

Vista:

Can you see beyond this space?
Kaufmann, Sr.'s study, master bedroom

Sound:

What can you hear? Is it loud or soft?
Kaufmann, Sr.'s study, guest house

Climate, temperature:

How cold, hot, dry, damp is it?
Guest house

Activity Sheet

EXPERIENCING SPACE

A SHORT LIST OF QUESTIONS ONE MIGHT ASK IN READING A SPACE

- How does this space make me feel?
- What activity might be appropriate to this space? Why? Did this space have a former life? What might that have been?
- How many people can this space accommodate? Are there other people in the space? Are you aware of them?
- What is the shape of this space?
- What is the scale of this space? What is your size in relation to that of the space?
- What materials are used to create this space?
- Can you see how the space is constructed? Can you identify its structure? What structural elements can you see?
- What are the textures evident in this space?
- What are the colors used in this space?
- Where are you in the space?
- Where is the circulation meant to occur in this space? How do you know?
- Describe the qualities of light. What is the source of light? Where is the source of light?
- What can I see in this space? What can I see from this space? Can I be seen in this space?
- What are my eyes meant to do in this space?
- What are the acoustic qualities of this space?
- What are the climatic qualities in this space?
- What scents or temperatures can you identify in this space?
- Does this space have clear enclosure/boundaries? What indicates this to you?
- Why does this space make you feel the way you do?